The Commonweal

April 25, 1947

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SYMBOL and MYTH

Dorothy Thompson

Censorship in Japan

Paul Vincent Miller

Lofty Ireland, Darkly Sung

Elizabeth Johnson

VOLUME XLVI

15c

NUMBER 2

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Next Week

Spring Book Number

Every issue of The Commonweal has a certain literary flavor because of the way it is written and the interest manifested in poetry and current books. Yet once each spring and fall and at Christmastime the magazine concentrates its attention on the arts with the aid and comfort of more than the usual series of publishers' announcements. This spring the book number is to include the following:

THE NORTH AFRICAN SCHOOL, by Anne Fremantle, which presents the influential literary group headed by Albert Camus now flourishing in Paris.

LOTTE LEHMANN, by Vincent Sheean, reveals the serious interest in music of the author of "Personal History" as he views Lotte Lehmann as a superb interpreter of the *lieder* form.

SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL, by Francois Mauriac, is a fascinating discussion of the points of meeting and of separation between the Christian and the philosophical materialist.

Also an informally annotated list of leading spring books and featured reviews by such critics as Philip Burnham, Elizabeth Johnson, Henry Rago, E. P. Richardson, Leo J. Trese, and Mason Wade.

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The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLVI April 25, 1947 NUMBER 2

THE WEEK 27
SYMBOL AND MYTH *Dorothy Thompson* 31
CENSORSHIP IN JAPAN *Paul Vincent Miller* 35
THE STAGE *Kappo Phelan* 38
THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 38
LOFTY IRELAND, DARKLY SUNG *Elizabeth Johnson* 39
MORE BOOKS OF THE WEEK
The Web of Government—Curious Relations—Soil and Steel—Life and the Dream—New Guinea Head Hunt—Land of Plenty—The Wayward Bus—Three Came Home—Prepared for Rage—Saudi Arabia—Struggle on the Veld.

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The Phone Strike

LET US HOPE that for the public's convenience (some people might be ungracious and old-fashioned enough to call it the public's renewed inconvenience, after a blessed respite) the telephone strike will be over by the time these lines reach their readers. It is unfortunate that in all the talk about the strike very little emphasis has been placed on one of its most important aspects. It would be possible, in the light of existing gadgetry, for the telephone companies and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company to eliminate many thousands—perhaps even a hundred thousand—of their employees within a relatively short time by converting substantially all the telephone service in this country—including long distance—into dial service. The telephone workers are well aware of this, and the threatened technological unemployment involved in presently existing gadgetry has certainly been a big consideration in the strike. The demand for the closed shop—merely one form of union security—and the demand for larger pensions both reflect this threat. And it is precisely on the issue of union security that management has most loudly raised its howls. Union security, we are vehemently told, is undemocratic and is about the equivalent of enforced membership in a nazi party. Free Americans must be protected in their God-given right to join, *or not to join,* a union. So runs the logic.

No one will deny that the closed shop and all other forms of union security are subject to abuse; that is why so many friends of labor insist that a closed shop must be accompanied by an open union—i.e., one having no membership restrictions whatever, other than competence. But to say this much is by no means to approve management's sudden new devotion to what it calls democracy. Only by union security is it possible to forge a labor movement strong enough to be effective and to cushion the impact of such mass technological employment as the American telephone industry is capable of producing. And in this instance Catholics should be proud of the support the telephone workers have received very generally throughout the Catholic clergy and press, ranging from the Brooklyn *Tablet* to the Jesuits' *America.*

A Great Refusal

SUMMER in imminent and with it a terrifying deadline. It has long been coming. Yet no provision has yet been made for the displaced persons when UNRRA ceases relief in Europe, June 30. The possibility of evading the problem any longer evaporated when the International Refugee Organization failed to come up with sufficient funds from the various nations to supplant UNRRA by June 30. The United States now finds herself squarely confronted with lone responsibility for the half million Balts, Poles, Ukrainians and others in their occupation zone who have preferred the bleakness and confinement of camp life to the tender mercies of the police states from which they came.

What is the answer of the United States in this compelling urgency? "Gentle pressure," is the way the newspapers put it. That means that the American occupation authorities in Germany are again offering the incentive of enough food for sixty days to every displaced refugee who volunteers to return to his homeland. When this stratagem was tried last fall some 48,000 Poles responded, although many of them have since drifted back to the American-supervised encampments. In any case it is now agreed that it is the most determined Poles who remain, along with a couple of hundred thousand Balts and Ukrainians upon whom Russia is eager to confer the blessings of their USSR citizenship. With such a prospect what boots a little extra food? Obviously, the pressure is very gentle.

The following choices remain: forcibly to ship these American wards home; to abandon them to their own devices and probable starvation; to continue the camps and supplant UNRRA with American funds; to resettle these refugees from totalitarianism in the United States and other

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countries. The first and second are unacceptable to Americans. The third would be a heavy drain on the American taxpayer, would simply postpone any real solution and meanwhile render these war victims less and less capable of again becoming self-supporting.

Inevitably it is resettlement which offers the only practicable solution. "Selective encouragement of immigration" is already in progress in the majority of the countries recently polled by the International Labor Office. The well-endowed United States is not one of them. That is the crux of the matter.

If the United States were to allow even one half of her unused immigration quotas for the years from 1940 to 1946, that would account for more than America's share of DP's, and the country could easily absorb them, for we have admitted fewer immigrants in the past three decades than in any thirty years of our history. They would be subject to all requirements of desirability including personal sponsorship which would prevent their becoming a public charge. There is every indication from experience, anyway, that the skills and ambition which these people would bring would actually add to the wealth of the nation.

Self interest and human need dictate such a policy. It is strongly advocated by civic and religious groups, by a number of national organizations which themselves have performed invaluable rescue stints, by AFL and CIO spokesmen, by President Truman himself. Yet Congress has scarcely budged an inch toward passing the permissive legislation. Why? Is there a basic unease about our system, our potential resources, the political attractiveness of our democracy, American prospects generally? Or is it rather that American Congressmen have been so frightened by a few letters from home that they flatly refuse to do what humanity, statesmanship and national self-interest dictate?

The Polish Boundary

POLAND'S historical tragedy has always been that she possesses no natural boundaries, lying as she does in the midst of what is principally plainland, with nothing more than rather inconsiderable rivers acting as natural landmarks. She has no Alps, no Pyrenees to cleave her from her neighbors. And so, when Russia insisted on the incorporation of Poland's eastern territories in the Ukrainian and White Russian Soviet Republics, geographic and ethnographic logic was as much on one side as the other, and Russia's claim could be opposed only on political grounds—something very difficult for either the United States or Great Britain to have done at the time. Inherent in the Russian claim against eastern Poland was an implication that Poland would be recompensed with territory on her western frontier—a proposal which would have been just only to the extent that relatively small and already Polish areas be involved. At Potsdam the size of Poland's recompense began to take shape. It was there decided that the Poles should temporarily administer a very considerable slice of what was eastern Germany, the actual boundaries to be determined at the peace conference. Since possession is nine-tenths of the law, and since the present Polish Government has been admirably efficient in expelling substantially all the Germans who lived under its tender ministrations, we are now confronted by a sad impasse. Mr. Marshall wants an international commission to define the boundaries, the southern stretches of which would presumably be moved back toward Poland so as to give Germany agricultural lands she desperately needs and so as to reduce to a minimum the likelihood of some strong future irredentist movement in Germany proper. This Mr. Molotov and—as far as one can judge—every last Pole opposes. The result is greatly to improve Russia's prestige in Poland, her stock having gone up considerably in recent weeks because of a softening in the treatment of non-communist elements (Cardinal Sapieha has recently appealed to Poles abroad to return to Poland, assuring them that all who have not lost their citizenship can return without fear, and there are many rumors that the Vatican and Poland are being allowed to work out a new agreement). Yet General Marshall is basically right. He realizes that there are two great dangers implicit in making the present Polish-German frontier permanent. The first, as has already been hinted, is the fuel this would supply to any future German expansive nationalism; the second is the bargaining point this would give Russia in coming to any future agreement with Germany, since no one can doubt that Russia could force Poland to cede some of these western lands to Germany were Russia to see any political advantage for herself in such a procedure. A mess, however you look at it.

The Common Man at Ebbets Field

LES *ABSENTS*, Mr. Henry Wallace is going to find out when he gets home, *ont toujours tort*. It is not what the fellows in Washington will have to say to him that will hurt so much; real grief will not descend on Mr. Wallace until he hears about what happened at Ebbets Field while he was away. For, as everybody except Mr. Wallace and his rapt English listeners know by now, Mr. Branch Rickey, President of the Brooklyn Dodgers hardball team, recently decided that Jackie Robinson, the Negro infield star, will play for Brooklyn in the National League this year—an action which obviously places Mr. Rickey in charge of the century of the common man and leaves Mr. Wallace without a job.

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Judging by Mr. Rickey's first move, the century of the common man will be quieter from now on. It is not hard to guess what Mr. Wallace, had he been around at the time, would have done and said about the promotion of a Negro ballplayer to the National League. For the sake of Jackie Robinson, who must be getting a little tired of being treated as a social symbol instead of as a first baseman, it is just as well that the announcement of his new assignment was in Mr. Rickey's hands. Mr. Rickey has always been a reluctant attraction at a press conference, and he told the world of his plans for Jackie Robinson in his usual modest fashion. "The Brooklyn Dodgers today purchased the contract of Jackie Roosevelt Robinson from the Montreal Royals," he informed the press, in writing. Not a word about the century of the common man.

Mr. Wallace will be missed, of course. The century will be less rich, rhetorically, without him. Besides, Mr. Rickey smokes; frequently refers to men forty years old and more as "boys"; and if he throws anything for exercise, it is almost certainly nothing more extraordinary than a baseball. The common man page in the *New Republic* (we presume that Mr. Rickey will be taking that over now) will be less fevered than it has been under Mr. Wallace. Still, Mr. Wallace's favorite century has a better chance to turn out well under the direction of an older, more thoughtful man. It should be years before Mr. Rickey hears of the British *New Statesman and Nation*, and he may never even meet Senator Pepper.

Whose Empire?

THE FANTASTIC Henry Wallace speaking tour in itself constitutes a crazy contradiction to Mr. Wallace's emotional claim that the United States Government has chosen imperialism. By trying to persuade foreigners of his wrong and boneless sentiments on international problems, he affirms the importance of the views of those foreigners. He asserts by his action that the United States Government is no atom-mad clique of exploiters, designing or desiring to impose their own ideas and dominance upon the West and upon the wide World. The unfortunate English, who, of course, must listen to him—and without the perspective and the protective grains of salt and sand the folks back home are equipped with, to shake on the colored plumage of his rhetoric—will observe, we trust, that the American Government's sweet-and-sourest critic takes for granted their power and rightful importance in the process of working out a world politics for the United States, and he takes for granted with almost unprecedented presumption the fact that the American people and government welcome their collaboration, even though solicited by such a strange prodigal as he.

How extraordinarily imperialistic Wallace's actions may be in psychological effect! How easy it would be for the sorely tried English and the so precariously balanced French to feel it is unbearable and insensitive truculence for a nation to send into foreign countries at this dangerous and testing date not a symbol of the nation's strength and unity (when the other countries are anguished for the need of most minimum appearance of strength and unity), no persuader to win friends to his country's viewpoint or propagandist to tell of its strength, but rather a disaffected citizen, an opponent of his country's government and unity, a sentimental factional leader whose thesis is division and wickedness in his home. What a hopelessly, monstrously overpowering nation, those British and Europeans might feel, which would play in this manner at this time; which would, flaunting apparent weakness and absurdity, basically assume such careless heedless confidence in its final security!

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It would seem more human and more possibly of some use for Americans to take a quite different line with the rest of the world. However diverse the world may be, and even though there may exist now two, or four, or five separate civilizations in growth or decay or paralysis underneath the superficial linkage of trade and transportation and communications, there is, anyway, no doubt that everybody is closely threatened by the disaster of the same world-unifying war. The strains and competition of sovereigns have reached the level of total war (not really total, but so near it that too little is left out). There is no way to avoid doing something about it, because surely now, doing nothing at all is the commission of a grave act. The simple and primitive American should naturally at this point attack "foreigners"—not suggest perversely that they criticize us, but bluntly and barbarously call them yellow and lazy.

Except for the Russians and communists and except for unusual individuals and groups, the reflection of these foreigners on contemporary world history, viewed from North America, looks exactly that: yellow and lazy, routed and demoralized. It has looked that way increasingly now and for some years. During the War's campaign in the West, for instance, Europe was a great and populous and highly developed region, and there is where the most direct suffering from Hitler ravaged the earth. But, except for the British and the Poles, and, they say, a number of the Italians, who contributed really seriously to "the effort"? Who actually worked hard with backs and brains? It was not only the equipment, made by labor, in America and the squandering of resources, which flooded the lines and fronts and airs of the continent so that jeeps and trucks and tanks and aircraft and khaki almost hid the populations and wealth that was

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there. The Americans, lazy and spoiled and careless, undisciplined and with no traditions of soldiers or mature citizens, actually simply worked harder and sweated more and burnt up more nervous energy than their so nervously retiring or complaining European allies. It was none of it outside the scope of normal human beings reacting with normal interest.

All right. The United States is endangering the peace, and exerting power more deliberately over a larger area of the world's surface.

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That is true, but more than that seems very possibly true.

Real peace with the tranquillity of order can only come from submission of the powerful to the law of God, and that is not to be expected as protection during the present period. It can never come as *protection*. An organizing law and order, adequately elaborated and enforced, which has the sufficient loyalty of a clearly predominant section of society, can perhaps keep off annihilating warfare, and leave the way open for greater conversions to the perfect law and order of God. Perhaps the "natural," tolerable system of law and order is a waystation on the way to the perfect, but more likely, indeed, it is to be feared not. In any case it must never take priority, even in a rain of atom bombs, and individual persons must pray for their own and others' personal conversion out of the whole realm of prudent power and into that particular and true peace.

A law and order to check the war now dreaded is a common world concern, most certainly, and is no private affair of the United States. Contribution to it is not proportional to physical power. Imperfect and contingent as it is, it requires in itself creative content, organizing vitality of idea and spirit, attractive charm, and very hard work, in order to persuade the predominant strength of society to support it and so make it go.

The Truman Doctrine is most generously interpreted, and it appears most realistically, as an effort of our government to set up a proposition of law and order to which this country will pledge responsibility. (*No* proposition of law and order and *no* responsibility is the choice most of all likely to lead to war.) Who abroad, and who among Mr. Wallace's domestic friends, is proposing seriously any real alterations or substitutes for the Government's proposition? And what other governments are giving any responsible commitments to anything? The question is either nothing, or else *what law and order?* Nearly all considerations urge nearly all Americans to want the nations to come together freely, convinced in the law and order which they as well as we can shape, and bringing their own creativity and flavor and life. Those foreigners and those Americans who negatively complain of the Truman Doctrine, and also those who would passively welcome an empire of America, all betray the possibility that men might have a living framework for world politics and not once again an icy rule that can only freeze for a time the chaos which men seem to fear still worse.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Mild Footnote

THE PEOPLE of America may very well be the Romans of our times destined to bring and enforce "law and order" in a new world. But it is really unfortunate that those who are most conscious of this historic destiny always seem to talk about the world they want to civilize as if it were the same world, unchanged, that the Romans overran—filled only with Druids in their green forests, with stonehenges still the altars or whatnot for meetings, with bearded Gauls, wandering and competing Germanic tribes. They cannot understand why these people of Europe do not accept America's manifest destiny; they are impatient with them, so impatient that they end by talking about them as if they were not quite normal. Just above the star on the left hand side of this page Mr. Burnham describes the American war effort and adds that "It was none of it outside the scope of normal human beings reacting with normal interest."

In this attitude (of the Chicago School toward New York, and of the American-Romans-of-Today School toward Europe) lies the whole misunderstanding. In its simpler nineteen hundred form it deplored the absence of bathtubs; in 1947 it deplores the moral apathy of the French. But the French also are not terribly happy to have lost the war; the French are not delighted to have lost millions of men in two successive wars; the French are not proud of their inability to "react with normal interest." If they happened to be Americans, with American population, size and health, they would "react with normal interest." All they can do presently in their exhaustion and democratic confusion is to reject any Roman solution in the way of dictatorship—so far they have kept their General a Cincinnatus whether he wants to be one or not; they have avoided, so far, a civil war. That is the attitude of an exhausted people who are facing difficulties unimaginable to us; it is also the attitude of a people who still are a functioning democracy.

As long as we expect of tired people what we exact from our own confident, strong and exuberant youth and in the degree that our expectations are known to Europeans, we shall not exert much of that "attractive charm" which is also mentioned on this page. The Europeans are much more likely to join the noble law and order that Mr. Burnham seeks, if occasionally they are thought of by us as our equals.

C. G. PAULDING.

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Symbol and Myth

Must there be but one *form* of democracy?

Dorothy Thompson

AMONG THE MANY things I find myself wondering about is the idea that the only conceivably good government is democracy, as *we* understand it. Mr. Marshall, our Secretary of State defined it when he set forth the American view of the future government of Germany. Democracy, to us, is a republican form of government, created and re-created by the majorities of parties, with an independent judiciary, and civil liberties.

Now, this is the form of government I prefer to live under, but I cannot bring myself to believe that it is the only possible respectable form of government or that it is necessarily the best one for all peoples.

A Republic is the only conceivable form for the United States, but though Britain is certainly a political democracy, Britons apparently prefer constitutional monarchy, despite the contrary views of the late Mr. H. G. Wells. Indeed, I should guess that there is no more *popular* British political institution than the crown.

And if one considers the turbulent histories of all European republics with the single exception of Switzerland, one may certainly question whether their record compares well with constitutional monarchies. This is the fourth French Republic, and the second Czech and Polish Republic in a generation.

The first Austrian Republic of the parliamentary kind did not survive even to meet the entrance of Hitler. The first Spanish Republic ended in the Franco dictatorship and the first German in the Nazi dictatorship. European republics since antique days seem to be curiously subject to convulsions and to demise in behalf of tyrants. The constitutional monarchies have a better record of being able to resist tyranny, arising from political anarchy, and certainly Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and Denmark are not only quite as "democratic" but quite as "social" as any Republican rivals. Italy, of course, was a constitutional monarchy and went fascist, but anyone would be hard put to it to prove that the throne was importantly influential to that end; it was the throne that disposed of Mussolini, though it sanctioned his coming into power, too, but he was not created by the throne but by the people, or a very large proportion of them. He was a People's hero in the true Machiavellian sense of the word; the Prince of the Mob, who knew that the upper classes were more dangerous enemies than the masses or the bourgeoisie until the country was about to fall through war. Then, of course, they turned against him with the hatred of their previous love, as all mobs do. It was the people he flattered and who flattered him, not the throne. And, in the end, he proclaimed a Republic himself.

D. H. Lawrence, who possessed a great deal more psychological insight than most politicians, believed that pomp and circumstance are beloved of the masses. The elevation, protocol, romance, and decorum that surround and attend royal families apparently furnish a vicarious dignity to the subjects of a monarchy; and often the monarch, from his position above the acrimonies of party politics, is endowed in the minds of the people with an aura of goodness, impartiality and peace. He is also above all social classes in a peculiar realm of his own, which at least equalizes social classes in relation to himself. To royalty the richest merchant and his poorest employee are both "commoners," and he, the most elevated, the sovereign servant of them all.

I am no restorationist. Monarchs who have not fallen because of external pressure or the chaotic conditions of a lost war have lost their thrones because they did not know how properly to fulfil their functions. Edward VIII failed to recognize that he could not have the best of two worlds, be a monarch and an ordinary man. If his lady had not been American, she, too, would probably have known that. The King of Spain behaved in a most un-royal manner and it cost him his throne, for the business of kings is to set an example, at least in public behavior. Sovereigns, if they are to stay sovereigns, must be untouched by scandal and be, if not better, at least more decorous than any. The modern mood is to consider decorum trivial, but it is not trivial, for nothing involving standards of behavior is trivial.

Neither is tradition trivial; it is the conservationist force of society. In America the Republic is indissoluble from the tradition and the Constitution has, for most Americans, the sacredness

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which other peoples attach to the symbol of the crown.

But nowhere on this earth can the conditions which synchronized with the birth of the American constitutional democracy be re-created: a people who had broken with the previous state which ruled them; who had physically transplanted themselves into a totally new environment; who inhabited, and were certain to master and claim an unexplored continent; whose civilization was of the frontier; and whose traditions belonged to the future, not the past.

That is not the case anywhere else. It is far harder elsewhere to create new symbols. That the crown is hardly more than a symbol in constitutional monarchies does not mean that it is unimportant. Symbols and myths are part of the cohesive powers of state and society. The one European Republic, stable over centuries, Switzerland, recognizes this and Swiss political institutions are accompanied with considerable ritual.

When dictatorships usurp Republics, the dictators are thoroughly aware of the psychological power over the masses, of visible ritual, pomp, circumstance and glory.

Their parades, repeated celebrations, mass chantings, marshaling of serried ranks of workers, peasants, youth, etc., all in some distinguished uniform, are the circuses which have attracted and bemused the people from the first Caesar to the last. Apparently there is a hunger in the masses for some visualization of sovereignty and power, some opportunity to identify themselves, otherwise drab and weak individuals, with romantic strength. The pomp of European royalty is considerably more sober than that of dictators, and it is never orgiastic, but it evidently fulfils some inchoate popular desire or need and may satisfy an appetite which would otherwise be fed the poison of hysterical mass transports organized by usurpers.

Such things have, like religion, been called "opiates of the people," but I notice that the Russian régime dishes out its own opiates, in just the sort of military, sports, and workers' festivals, all highly organized and formal, which Hitler thought necessary or desirable. And the tomb of Lenin has become a pilgrimage-spot.

Under these circumstances, why the popular American opinion that monarchy is invariably "corrupt," a "burden on the people," and "reactionary?" Some of the most percipient modern European historians—Guglielmo Ferrero, for instance—were convinced that constitutional monarchy is that form of state best suited to the European temperament and tradition, and predicted long ago that its demise would ultimately result, not in democracy, but in tyranny.

It seems to me that in this matter it would be better for Americans to maintain, at least, a neutral attitude.

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Then, there is the opinion that the parliamentary state with delegates elected by universal suffrage through parties, on a geographical basis, is the ultimate and uniquely beneficial form of government.

I do not see why this should be so. There are certainly other conceivable forms of democratic state, and parliamentary democracy also has its grave difficulties. Even where parliamentary democracy enjoys, after long and successful tenure, the sanctity of tradition, its supporters are aware of its susceptibility to pressure groups, diverting it from its function to represent the whole.

In European countries where a many-party system is the rule, governments are usually based on unstable coalitions, and fall and are recomposed with turbulent frequency. One reason why France did not take action when Hitler broke the Treaty of Locarno was that the country was at the very moment in one of its usual government crises, and therefore paralyzed.

In all European countries where Russia has a strong influence, "unity parties," which furnish such a useful medium for communist control, have one appeal quite apart from communism. They reduce the number of contenders in the political arena and seem to promise some measure of that continuity and stability which the European peoples feel they need, and which the parliamentary democracies of the past have usually failed to give them.

Surely it is useful to enquire what *caused* the German people, or so large a proportion of them, to repudiate the Weimar Republic. It was hardly because the Germans wished to dispense with those *wohlerworbene Rechte* which were the historic German interpretation of what we call personal rights; nor because they wished to dispense with the independent judiciary, which had had a good record of impartial justice; nor because very many of them happily contemplated murdering Jews, or were pining for war to redress the Treaty of Versailles.

The Weimar Republic was unable to devise successful measures to deal with a succession of economic crises accompanied by widespread unemployment, and that played a great rôle. But even deeper, I think, was positive discontent with the Republic as an instrument of Order. The Weimar constitution was imported from Anglo-Saxon experience, with some non-Anglo-Saxon features, but the German experience is other, and the people never really liked it. It had, in itself, no great body of supporters, as, for instance, the American Constitution has. Most of the parties

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accepted it only as a means to attain something else. Among the strongest parties, the German Nationalists would have liked to restore the monarchy; the Social Democrats, whatever they may have said, wanted a state in which the industrial workers had decisive power; the Christian Socialists would have preferred a guild state; and, of course, there were the communists who wanted a dictatorship of the agents of the proletariat.

Through all parties and classes one could discern evidence that what the Germans wanted and were drawn to, was some sort of *organic* state. Perhaps the word organic in this connection means little to Americans, but it would not be necessary to explain it in speaking to any German with a High School education.

The German cannot happily think of the State as a forum or an arena. He sees it as an order, in which each person knows his duties, his rights, and his place. His concept of freedom is rather that people should be able to "graduate" from one station to another, as the result of demonstrated abilities, than move about, according to what we call "civil rights," and he would call "whims." "Rights" in German pre-Hitler common law, are *"wohlerworben,"* rights that have been *won*, by fulfilment of standards and performance of obligations.

The German talent is musical and the German idea of order and equality perhaps finds highest expression in the symphonic orchestra, where each plays his instrument to the best of his abilities, according to his tastes and talents, in interpreting the score selected, and the piccolo player knows himself to be no less important to the perfection of the performance than the first violinist. Germans do, indeed, as a people, like to follow orders, as an orchestra follows the lead of a conductor, but the conductor must also conduct within the score.

The Germans do have a sense of law, as well as of order. It is simply preposterous to try to wipe out, as some of our propagandists do, the record of hundreds of years, because of the last fifteen. The traditions of a nation and a people are not so quickly obliterated. Germany, on balance, has a record as a *lawful* nation.

But Germans are made extremely uncomfortable by any political system which encourages the idea that everyone can do anything he likes; it does not give them a sense of freedom but of psychological insecurity and *malaise*. Hegel is still the author of the state concept to which they feel most affinity. Hegel or Plato. They did not get the Hegelian or Platonic state through Hitler; they got the runaway state; actually the dissolution of the state and its usurpation by a "dynamic" party, destroying all order in lawless and arbitrary violence. But it is certainly still pertinent to enquire what they were looking and groping for. Obviously it was not Weimar democracy, which they already had.

And if Hegel is the wellspring of their concept of the state, it might be advisable to remember that, via Marx, Hegel is also the wellspring of the modern Russian state. If communism had been able to create a true "organic" order, grounded in European tradition, custom and law, it would, I think, appeal enormously to the Germans at this moment; certainly more than anything else being suggested to or imposed upon them. What revolts them in communism is its *dis*-order, violence, tyranny and traditionlessness, of which they have had enough. The revolt from Hitler — the real philosophical revolt — is not toward "progressivism," but toward tradition. Hitler, to their minds, was "progressive!"

But Germans were not, and still are not, revolted by the idea of an integrated, state-subservient economy, as such. To record that this is one's belief is not to say that it is one's own prejudice. I do not care for much German philosophy, including Hegel, toward whom I share Bertrand Russell's antipathy. But I find nothing in Hegel to support the opinion that his concept of the state would necessarily result in aggressive militarism. It could be an order filled with highly moral content.

Germans will even, still, if they dare, find things to praise in some nazi ideas as pure structure. I am not speaking of Germans who were nazis, but of Germans who always were, or at some time in the life of the régime became, bitterly opposed to nazism. But unlike their conquerors, they do not put all nazi ideas and practices into the same pot.

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Nowadays, of course, it is hard to get a genuine expression of opinion from any German. Usually he tells his conquerors what he thinks they want to hear, and if he is a politician eager for influence or power, he *must* tell them what they want to hear, or fail. But in his own mind—and if he finds an open-minded listener—he certainly differentiates between the nazi persecution of the Jews and the nazi rationing system; between the S.S. creation of an *"élite"* trained in cruelty as a mark of superiority, and the concept of an *élite* as such; between an economy integrated for war and the economic conquest of neighbors, and the very concept of integration. Most Germans with whom I have spoken, who felt they would not be denounced for an honest opinion, expressed the belief that up to a point, and if corruption had not set in because of other things in the nazi philosophy and method, in planned production, industrial relations, and the rational use of manpower and materials, the nazi social order was superior to its predecessor. Their opposition was

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on other grounds than this. Most Germans, I found, wanted no return to a "free enterprise" economy, in anything like our meaning of that term. That, to them, is not democracy but anarchy.

Neither do the Germans, now, nor do I think will they ever, have the *American* concept of individual "equality." In their Platonic concepts, there is a natural hierarchy of virtues, talents and abilities, which is not, by any means, the same as a class or caste system. The essence of a caste system is that it is rigid, fixed by circumstances of birth, or other privilege. The essence of natural hierarchy is that it obeys nature, in respect to individual endowments, which are but rarely passed from father to son, and have nothing to do with any sort of inherited privilege. To go back to the example of the orchestra, they do not think the piccolo player would be happier if he were playing the first violin, or ambitious to do anything for which he, by nature, was unfitted. Equality before the law—the right of the miller to challenge the great Friedrich when the King sought to level his mill to make a garden—that concept is as deep in German tradition as in any other.

Deeply rooted also, however, is the concept of the hero and the adoration of genius. This, I think, is an important source of German aberrations and troubles, because the idea of genius is combined with the concept that "genius makes its own laws." That was illustrated, even under the Republic, by episodes in which men who were popularly believed to be geniuses—made into geniuses for the most part by log-rollers in the press—committed acts which would have sent other men to jail, and escaped just punishment merely on the argument that they were not like other men.

Now, admiration, respect for, and even humility before great and illustrious talent is not, of itself, an evil thing. But it can be perverted into something terribly evil and dangerous. If a nation with such genius-adoration can be encouraged to believe that it is, as a nation, uniquely or exceptionally gifted and creative, and if implanted in them, already, is the idea that "genius makes its own laws," it is only a step to declaring that the genius-nation is above all laws except its own. That is precisely what Hitler persuaded very large numbers of Germans to believe.

Certainly no one can comprehend the peculiar servile deference accorded Hitler, without understanding this German obsession with genius. People who otherwise would have been smitten with horror at most of his measures and ideas, exempted him on the argument that he was a "genius." Even "evil genius" had a fascination.

The de-Christianizing of modern society, in Germany as elsewhere, contributed to making this concept and the perversion of the idea of genius possible of wide support. In the Christian concept, though deference may be accorded genius, genius exempts no one from deference, in turn, to God, and the highest aim of genius is to serve the truths of God. Genius, in the Christian concept, does not exempt; like *noblesse*, it obliges. It follows from this concept that if a highly gifted man commits a crime, he deserves not a lesser but a greater punishment. Only the other day I read a most thoughtful and penetrating letter from an eighty-year-old German, who had become convinced that renovation of the concept of genius was what was most necessary to German re-education.

It is hard to see how the attitude toward genius can be renovated without bringing God into the picture, for in a Godless Germany the genius-hero could probably again usurp God's place—as he has in de-Christianized Russia.

Before and during the war there were groups at work in Germany on the means of German renovation when Germany should have lost the war, as all of them were convinced she would, and should. The story of these groups, which eventually became fused into practically one movement, has been told by Allen Dulles, who headed the O.S.S. in Switzerland and was in touch with them. His book "German Underground" is appearing in these days.

The movement which eventually coalesced consisted, he tells us, of most divergent elements—socialists, liberals, conservatives. But they, and especially those in the "Kreisau Circle" around young Count Helmuth von Moltke, found a point of compromise and integration. The common denominator, uniting both Marxists and conservatives, was recognition of the profound validity of the Christian ethic.

These men devised a German program, and though few of them lived to defend its fulfilment, since almost all perished on Hitler's gallows, it is certainly highly important to know what they thought.

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They wished acceptance of the U.S.S.R. into the family of nations, and the integration of Germany in a European Commonwealth. They favored the indictment of nazi criminals before the Hague Tribunal, or an international court of victors, neutrals, and one representative of the New Germany; they favored socialization of natural resources, banks, insurance companies, and labor participation, on equal terms, in a national economic and agricultural council.

They wished political decentralization, with direct political democracy only at the bottom. Each citizen was to vote for local officials and provincial diets, and fathers were to be favored by an extra ballot for each minor child. The

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local diets would elect their own presidents and the members of the national Reichstag. (This goes back to the old American idea of the indirect election of senators.) Primary education should, in their opinion, rest largely in the *churches*—Protestant and Catholic (or Jewish) according to the wish of the parents. Professional colleges and universities were to be separated, the latter to be devoted only to science and the humanities. Administrative posts, above a certain level, were to be open only to graduates of both a university and a professional school, with equal access to education at all levels secured for all.

Here, again, is a concept of the *organic* state, with checks and balances even to the power of an overweening majority. Here is the concept of a governing élite, democratically founded. And here is the emphasis on ethic, as the true basis of order, and the importance of ethical training in the life of the child. Observing the crime wave which their nation had become, they, like George Washington, could say:

> Of all dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion.

And this program was not worked out by whim, but by men who constituted the moral and intellectual cream of the German nation, working painstakingly, in the concentration of fullest consciousness, under hazard of their lives, on a problem which was for them and for their people a matter of life and death.

What arrogance and folly have caused disregard for the thoughts of these men of great tribulation on what was good for Germany? Who better than they deserves a hearing—they who died, many after terrible torture, that Germany should be saved *for*, not against, mankind? Can Mr. Molotov, Mr. Bevin, or Mr. Marshall, trying to hit on some compromise solution in conferences lasting a few days *possibly* know better?

That the religious re-education of Germany is even more important than the intellectual would, of course, be denied by the Soviet leaders. But the Germans themselves, the best of them, knew, as we have seen, that what was sick was not the German intellect, but the German soul. And the American mood is agnostic in complement to the Russian atheism. American authorities actually prohibited religious education in the schools of one of the Laender, after a poll of the parents of all school children had revealed that 90 percent of them favored it! That decision also overlooked the fact that the strongest resistance to nazism, which braved even death, was in the ranks of those who had other, more profound loyalties, than the national state—namely the communists, and the deeply faithful Christians.

The emotional attitude of all peoples and especially, if anything is certain, of the Germans, is far more important than the intellectual. It is not what we "think," but what we *are* that determines our characters.

No one can possibly foretell how things will eventually turn out in Germany or anywhere else in Europe, nor am I writing to defend, *per se,* any German conception of the state. But common sense decrees that no political or economic system that owes its life to foreign conquerors, and is without satisfaction of deep yearnings, will outlast the presence of their bayonets. Nor is there evidence that any of Germany's conquerors have lost much sleep trying to penetrate into what these yearnings and needs may be. And certainly it is widom to ponder the truth of the old saw, that "What is one man's meat is another man's poison."

No political system, anywhere, or at any time, has fully solved the intricate problems, mechanical, philosophical, psychological, and moral, involved in the governing of men, and it is a safe prediction that none ever will. The *civitas dei* will forever remain an incomplete realization on this earth, men being men. But there is something of the totalitarian spirit in all political universalisms, even the universalism of parliamentary democracy. The idea that there is only ONE good system usually, as Tennyson poetically warned, ends in corrupting the world and bringing, with corruption, stagnation. No human system can claim or expect immortality.

And the exercise of humility has never made governors or conquerors less intelligent.

Censorship In Japan

PAUL VINCENT MILLER

QUIETLY, unobtrusively, the Censor is at work in Japan. The quality of this censorship may be gauged by the following *haiku,* a Japanese poem of 17 syllables, which was submitted to the American authorities for pre-publication censorship and suppressed as containing material against American interests:

> "Small green vegetables
> Are growing in the rain
> Along the burned street."

The reference is to a scene so familiar in present-day Japan, that of vegetable gardens planted by the Japanese wherever there is an available piece of ground whether it be along a busy thoroughfare or among the ruins.

And should you presume the above is simply an isolated case, consider the following:

> "It seems to be a dream far, far away
> That we wielded bamboo spears
> Priced at only one yen and twenty sen
> Against the big guns and giant ships."

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The reference here is to the fact that during the last days of the war the Japanese government had instituted a kind of Home Guard equipped only with bamboo poles as weapons.

It is rather difficult to determine why these poems were deemed dangerous. The *haiku*, as prescribed by long tradition, strives merely to evoke a mood by means of a paradox. The second poem probably is best interpreted as a wry comment by a Japanese on the astonishing lengths to which his war leaders could go in publicizing their asininity. Other interpretations of this second poem are possible but they would not represent so well the current preference of the Japanese for sardonic comments on their political and military immaturity—an attitude that is commendable both for its common sense and its humility.

But the American authorities in Japan are very touchy about criticism. Indeed, when one Japanese writes a personal letter to another he has to be very careful not to express a derogatory opinion about censorship because censorship stations located in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Nagoya are very busy looking for just such things. The italicized portion of the following personal letter, sent by one Japanese civilian to another, was deleted by the censor:

> ". . . As I have not received your answer to my letter which was probably mailed on the 10th and in which I enclosed my photograph taken in January, I am anxious to know what has become of it. *Because the Occupation Forces now censoring in Hakata are ill-reputed, I had some misgivings in sending a letter to you, and I was awaiting your answer still more eagerly.* I suppose it must have been lost on its way. . . ."

Not all letters receive this kind of treatment. More frequently the offensive item is transcribed to what is known as a "comment sheet" which is forwarded to the main office in Tokyo. The original letter then is directed to the proper person without deletion. The following excerpt from another letter was not deleted although the sentiments expressed probably are more bitter than those found in the first example:

> ". . . Most of the letters are examined these days, you know. This is quite provoking. Although freedom of speech and freedom of thought are loudly proclaimed, at present they are more limited than during the war. . . ."

On the basis of thousands of comment sheets pouring into Tokyo every week the Civil Censorship Detachment of GHQ has been able to state in its official publication:

> "Broadly, the attitude toward SCAP and its policies is still favorable. However, strong exception is taken to certain directives and to the controls maintained on the press and, above all, to postal censorship, which Japanese in increasing numbers are criticizing."

From this and other statements issued by the Civil Censorship Detachment it is safe to say, first, that the American authorities are aware that our censorship policy is creating considerable bad feeling, and secondly, that they feel, despite the antagonism created, that the policy should be continued.* But inasmuch as the reasons have been enshrouded in a mysterious secrecy the American observer cannot be blamed for viewing the whole situation with some suspicion, especially when he learns that deliberate efforts have been made to keep such information away from people in the United States.

Unfortunately I am not able to quote verbatim a memorandum sent by a high-ranking policy-making officer to the several District Censorship Stations throughout Japan and Korea but the substance of it was this: *that extreme secrecy must be maintained concerning all censorship operations inasmuch as there are groups in Congress and among the American people who would be adverse to the censorship policy. Those people must not be given access to the facts.*

While one naturally will make allowances for the fact that our military caste frequently prefers to impose a veil of secrecy over operations which, when disclosed, sometimes prove to have been quite inoffensive, one cannot avoid feeling uneasiness when a function so dangerous as censorship is wrapped in obscurity. Moreover, this uneasiness certainly is not allayed when the military authorities attempt to curtail the activities of American correspondents in Japan. One can find some justification in the exercise of censorship powers over a defeated nation which, at least theoretically, is still capable of disturbing the peace, but one finds it very hard to see how Americans, too, have deserved to be denied the opportunity to hear the truth.

Too much news is cut at the source so that the American public gets a bare trickle of information. There is hardly a day goes by in Japan when some important story does not come over the teletype machines with instructions from higher headquarters that it be canceled. Such was the story about the American general who stated that war with Russia could be expected not in a matter of years, months, or even weeks, but in a matter of days, and that the United States was making strong preparations in Japan for the event. Our militarists speak a strange language overseas which would quickly arouse the ire of the American people were it not for the activities of the Army's Public Relations Office which tactfully prevents disturbing stories from reaching the public.

Even a cursory glance at the censorship situa-

*It is an indication of the Army's awareness of the problem that Mr. Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union has been invited to survey the situation in Japan and Korea, acting as a private citizen.—The Editors.

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tion in Japan reveals the necessity for much of the secrecy with which its functions are conducted. The Japanese Theatre, Dance, Radio, and the Mails are all under close surveillance by our authorities. Nothing can be published or produced in Japan without first being submitted for our examination. This censorship is not mild and perfunctory; it is carried out with such methodical diligence that even a people as patient and subservient as the Japanese are obliged to wince at it.

We cannot demur, for instance, when a political candidate is made to submit his speech to the American government before he broadcasts it over the radio. But in many instances large portions of these speeches have been cut not because they contain anything seditious or disadvantageous to the United States but merely because the candidate had given too accurate a picture of Japan's present miserable condition.

The newspapers have been forced to become so circumspect that the Japanese people cannot help but feel that they merely are echoing SCAP policies. "Daily papers and the radio are doing their best to eulogize the Yankees," says one letter-writer. "The administration is entirely carried on under the direction of General MacArthur." Another letter-writer states, "I was told to be very careful in writing about the Allied nations' policies, tendencies, etc. Therefore, if my thesis is to be made public I should like to revise the proof again." A third letter-writer confides, "It makes me angry to think that this censorship is the work of an army which prides itself on its freedom." A fourth says, "If it (censorship) is for the purpose of investigating opinions there is no freedom of correspondence. . . . I have often discovered that the Americans do not practice what they preach concerning freedom and equality, and they do not regard us as human." Still another declares, "At present the radio, newspapers, and magazines are released only after being censored by MacArthur's headquarters. Is this the so-called 'freedom of speech?' News or information cannot be released unless the crimes of Japan committed in the past are compared to the perfect conduct of the Allied Forces, and are featured! Is this freedom of speech?' "

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A large percentage of Japanese movies and plays have been found unfit for presentation. While some of the instances of suppression have been based on an intelligent and progressive policy that would make our occupation a boon to the Japanese, there have been too many instances of arbitrary and stupid censorship. Hardly any consideration is shown for centuries-old *mores* and customs of the Japanese people. The idea seems to be to teach them to produce the same anemic type of movie that we have developed.

Traditional Japanese dances, many of them as firmly established a part of their cultural heritage as "My Old Kentucky Home" is to Americans, have been suppressed because they were claimed either to exhibit passions incompatible with civilized society or to reflect unpleasantly on America. I remember one performed by a maiden, an old favorite, that tells the sad story of the mistress of Townsend Harris following his departure from Japan. This was suppressed as reflecting unfavorably on America. Fortunately, not all the Japanese know which of their dances have been suppressed and I was able to see it performed in a restaurant in Kumomoto.

Anything sent through the mails is thoroughly investigated. Occasionally the mail of American soldiers is opened if it is suspected that they are assisting Japanese to send messages to friends or relations in America. Business reports, descriptions of new inventions and appliances, new methods in the fields of mining, agriculture, and science—all these documents come under the scrutiny of American authorities. The information is transferred to comment sheets before the original communication is forwarded to its proper destination. A business man cannot expect to keep even his little trade secrets from us; a struggling inventor his secretly developed gadget. He may try to circumvent our censorship by using the telephone rather than the mails but he soon discovers that part of the job of censorship is to record telephone conversations and telegrams.

Such is the quality of our censorship in Japan. I do not mean to imply that it is all bad or that it has not assisted us in shaping our occupation policies. That would be far from correct. Thousands of comment sheets find their way to Tokyo every week. There they are classified, tabulated, and studied for possible trends. From them the authorities have been able to gather a wealth of information concerning every phase of life in Japan. The Japanese attitude is learned toward such subjects as Fraternization, Russia, SCAP, Reaction of Ex-Soldiers on their Return, Censorship, War Criminals, Rumors of Impending War, Education, the Black Market, Communism, etc. Not only is an accurate gauge of public opinion thus gained but a vast accumulation of data.

Many of the officers and War Department civilians working at censorship are liberal and broadminded men. Many more are worthless parasites who neither are fitted for their job nor have the slightest interest in anything but earning a salary with the least amount of effort possible. Generally speaking, however, censorship functions are carried on efficiently. Frequently the policies laid down in Tokyo are disregarded or misinterpreted by District Stations with the re-

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sult that far too many individual instances of injustice and stupidity can be cited. But it would require a very painstaking study to determine accurately the operational efficiency of so complicated an agency.

It is probably true that censorship is necessary immediately after the defeat of an enemy nation, not so much to encourage in the defeated people a love of democracy—which it hardly can be expected to do—but simply to insure peace and to carry out a just Occupation Policy. In the first stages of occupation there is always the danger that anarchy and disorder will result. In Japan, however, that danger has passed and the people have proved themselves law-abiding and cooperative. It is also true that censorship does not coincide either with our professions or our ideals as a democratic nation. If we supplement this formal objection to censorship with the additional argument that its practical results in Japan have been only to antagonize the people who have come in contact with it, we present our military men with a case to which we have the right to expect them to make a reply.

But inasmuch as they continue to cloak their operations in secrecy and refuse to admit that the matter is one in which the American public has the right to ask questions, we can assume only that they are adopting the same fascistic methods and responding with the same lack of responsibility to the home government that has characterized so many military machines of the past and brought shame and reproach on the countries they represented.

The Stage & Screen

Alice In Wonderland

IT IS FINE to be able to state that there is indeed no quarrel between nostalgia and delight in the viewing of this revival of the Carroll-La Gallienne classic. What was, fifteen years ago, high, and sheer and sure invention, is so still; and I do not feel even the expected embellishments of memory can lag the show in any way. I think it is important to underline that this is a revival, not only of a *play* but of a *production,* and perhaps the easiest way to realize the difference will be to search round in one's memory for any other offering, over the same period, which one would like to see exactly, perfectly repeated. In my judgment, and certainly through general hearsay, only the recent Menotti opera, and perhaps the long-ago Dane-Addinsell "Come of Age" have roused a like public sigh. And I feel there is no question but that the clue to this kind of tenacious, cumulative, audience stir will be contained in the one credit line, "Entire Production Devised and Directed by Eva Le Gallienne." Here is the crux. As she is her own adaptor, originally also her own producer, Miss Le Gallienne has here worked for herself and for what Gertrude Stein used to call "strangers," in other words, not Mammon but the world. The responsibility is single, outright, and traceable. Dealing with perhaps the most memorized book in the language, the director's editing has been as daring as it is scrupulous—witness the welding of the Red King into his brother of Hearts so that all the best lines are saved and the composite character still entirely faithful. Her choice of workers is as astute; her portioning of all the facets of scene, song, dance and tunes precisely figured to motivate, not dress, the tale; and not least, her deliberate refusal to allow any piece of the show to be commercially (Hollywood-Radio) scattered, during the years, simply adds to your good luck and mine. The result of this intransigeance is, as you've probably heard, a real magicking of the black-and-white: the enlarged Tenniel drawings again slide marvelously on and off through the prescribed "flow" of light; Remo Bufano's clever creatures again roll their eyes and visibly grimace; Richard Addinsell's lovely score again points, accompanies, and heralds the action. And (I feel it is unavoidable teachery to mention it) this smallest pig appeared even more extraordinary than his celebrated predecessors. I thought it might be Richard Waring's strangely sinister Hatter which seemed to make the Mad Tea Party a little too mad, although this may also have been caused by the fact that Bambi Linn's Alice leans almost wholly upon grace and lightness and not at all upon indignation. However this is probably an arguable quibble, for Miss Linn is otherwise fleet and entirely charming. For the rest, since one must choose, Theodore Tenley's Caterpillar; Eugene Stuckmann's King; Jack Manning's Gryphon; and Angus Cairns's Mock Turtle marked high spots for me. But all are clearly good, and fitting.

To my certain knowledge eight fairly recent children are at present angelically rushing through their days, since afternoon tickets for this event are already on the mantelpiece. If, as I suspect, you have trouble jamming your heir into one of the many matinees, I honestly think I should "speak roughly" to him, hurl him out to one of the evening performances, and let schools, schedules, and subsequent play-acting fall by the way. The dream-box of the nation's nurseries ought to hold some dazzle, for now and soon, it seems to me. In any case, that *gasp of enchantment* now rising at the International is not only a tribute to brilliant and serious showmanship. Even more, it seems somehow to constitute a kind of trust-fund for all concerned. And I think all are concerned. (*At the International.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Three Families

IF HOLLYWOOD is to continue making films about alcoholics, let us hope that these pictures continue to show the understanding that prevails in "The Lost Weekend" and the newest addition to the series. Although the plot of *"Smash-Up"* is at times maneuvered to emphasize its arguments, Walter Wanger's excellent production is imbued with compassion and comprehension for its central character. Furthermore, Susan Hayward succeeds in making us understand what this woman is going through as she resorts to drink to drown her feelings of insecurity

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and inadequacy. Once a popular nightclub singer, Angie devotes herself to her husband's singing career. As he rises in popularity (shown through a series of scenes brilliantly satirizing radio work) Angie has less and less to do. Her servant-run apartment and her young daughter, whom she loves very much, do not fill her time. Success and life are not turning out as beautifully as promised in the sappy songs her husband sings. Angie even imagines that her husband has fallen in love with his secretary. "Smash-Up" is not particularly pleasant to watch (this subject matter never is), but it is fascinating. Under Stuart Heisler's direction, the rest of the cast support Miss Hayward well. I found Lee Bowman rather weak as the husband, but perhaps this was intentional. Eddie Albert as a good friend, and Marsha Hunt, as the secretary whose love for Angie's husband is not returned, give performances that add greatly to the picture's strength.

"The Macomber Affair" is an even more unpleasant picture; and it attempts to point out no moral at all as it goes about its absorbing business exposing three people of various degrees of immorality. The film's strength lies in the superb direction of Zoltan Korda, the good script much of which was lifted right from the Hemingway story on which it was based, the extraordinary scenes of hunting in Africa, and the straightforward, honest acting of the three leads: Robert Preston as the hunter who finally overcomes his cowardice but knows only a few hours of happiness before his wife shoots him; Joan Bennett as his wife—as nasty a female as was ever depicted in the movies; and Gregory Peck as the guide who adjusts his morals to his clients' standards. The nervous tension mounts as these characters become more and more mean in their behavior, and finally you wonder why on earth they don't give up their ill-fated expedition and just go home. If by any chance you stay until the end, you'll discover that the scriptwriters, although quite faithful to Hemingway up to a point, tacked on an ending that attempts to justify the accident (?) and leave some hope for Mrs. Macomber. Whether you can call this realistic film entertainment you'll have to decide for yourself.

This cannot be said of the newest Noel Coward opus to come to these shores. *"This Happy Breed"* was made during the war, and I am sorry it was not shown here then. Perhaps we might have been more lenient toward this film that now seems endlessly long as it goes through twenty years of small talk and trivia called life. "This Happy Breed," well steeped in Coward's patronizing air, is really a lower-middle-class "Cavalcade." We watch the Gibbons family live, laugh, love, suffer—and in some cases, give birth and die. We appreciate Mr. Coward's efforts to tell us that the English, though tired, still have stamina; but we wish he'd said his say more quickly. Director David Lean could have helped too, for, while he got some fine performances (particularly from Robert Newton and Celia Johnson as Mr. and Mrs. Gibbons, and Amy Veness and Alison Leggatt as relatives), the picture on the whole becomes tiresome because it follows too closely its own set pattern of a series of well-defined vignettes. The technicolor is exceptionally good and so is the production. Moviegoers who like a nice leisurely movie may enjoy this long look at what some of the English did from 1919 to 1939. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Lofty Ireland, Darkly Sung

ELIZABETH JOHNSON

IRELAND has, from the beginning of Britain's growth of power, been buffeted and bled and called a nation of rebels. The courtlier graces and fine literary treasures of the Anglo-Saxon bailiwick were not to be considered at all in the same breath as the wild Gaelic laments and warrior cries from across the Irish Sea. But the end of the nineteenth century saw an enthusiastic Gaelic revival in the translations of Dr. Hyde, Eleanor Hull, Robin Flower, Kuno Meyer, Padraic Pearse and others, while the renescent Irish spirit triumphed in Synge, Lady Gregory, Yeats, AE, James Stephens and James Joyce.

Now comes a most comprehensive anthology covering a thousand years of Irish poetry, a collection in which the haunting spirit of the Green Isle is found next to the ballads of the music-hall paddy.*

Mrs. Hoagland has written an explicit and revealing introduction, and, where she, as a true daughter of Ireland, could have exploited the Gaelic cause, she writes with impassioned dignity. At the close of her fine introduction, the author makes several penetrating statements: "The true literature of Ireland has a fine and strong soul, and treats naturally of natural things. All things are pure to the pure, and it is only when dead, tasteless, silly pseudo-art is placed on a pedestal that lively truth is found offensive. Let there be a return to the medieval feeling for the universal character of truth."

The reader would do well to keep those thoughts before him when he starts browsing (a glutting error to do otherwise in this particularly fertile field) through Mrs. Hoagland's anthology.

The book is divided into four parts: Ancient Irish,

* 1,000 Years of Irish Poetry. Edited by Kathleen Hoagland. Devin-Adair. $5.00.

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Modern Irish, Anonymous Street Ballads, and Anglo-Irish Poetry. Much that is favorable could be said about each section, but there is not enough space here to do them all justice. This will have to suffice as a general criticism; Mrs. Hoagland has chosen carefully and with a broad scope. She has had to, perforce, include some dripping ballads along with some great poetry.

It is the Ancient Irish portion which I found especially enchanting, the more so because it seemed to have a poignant meaning for our unhinged and desperate globe, and because it illustrates the editor's remarks appearing above.

From pulpit and radio and in many books there has been a similar thesis: a return to a Christian way of life is the only salvation for the over-mechanized, spiritually void modern man. I cannot think of a more challenging declaration of faith for the honest Christian than the poem, "Saint Patrick's Breastplate, or the Deer's Cry," attributed to the Irish saint in the 5th century. "Patrick sang this when the ambuscades were laid against his coming—that he might not go to Tara to sow the faith."

The early Christian poetry of Ireland is filled not only with simple religious fervor, but it is also wrinkled over with humor and the minutiae of nature and of daily life.

The Scribe
(Ninth Century)

Over my head the woodland wall
Rises; the ousel sings to me,
Above my booklet lined for words
The woodland birds shake out their glee.

There's the blithe cuckoo chanting clear
In mantle grey from bough to bough!
God keep me still! For here I write
A scripture bright in great woods now.

Robin Flower's rendition of this charming poem seems to me to be more telling than the combined translations that Mrs. Hoagland has used.

A few lines from the delightful poem written by an Irish student at the Monastery of Carinthia must be quoted:

The Student and His White Cat
(Late Eighth Century)

I and Pangur-Bán, my cat,
'Tis a like task we are at;
Hunting mice is his delight,
Hunting words I sit all night.

Better far than praise of men
'Tis to sit with book and pen;
Pangur bears me no ill-will,
He, too, plies his simple skill. . . .

One of the characteristic traits of Irish writing, be it poetry or prose, is the lamenting gaiety ever present. Laughter is swift, but it is seldom full of mirth, nor does it last long. On the other hand, the Irish seem to enjoy trouble, sprinkling their grieving with highly-colored boasting of their past prowess. The "Lament of the Old Woman of Beare" is poignant in its reminiscing and very human in the telling.

Lament of the Old Woman of Beare
(Late Tenth Century)

Ebbtide to me!
My life drifts downward with the drifting sea;
Old age has caught and compassed me about,
The tides of time run out.

The "Hag of Beare!"
'Tis thus I hear the young girls jeer and mock;
Yet I, who in these cast-off clouts appear,
Once donned a queenly smock.

Ye love but self,
Ye churls! today ye worship pelf!
But in the days I lived we sought for men,
We loved our lovers then! . . .

On sweet May-morn
Their ringing laughter on the breeze is borne,
While I, who shake with ague and with age,
In Litanies engage.

Amen! and woe is me!
I lie here rotting like a broken tree;
Each acorn has its day and needs must fall,
Time makes an end of all!

I had my day with kings!
We drank the brimming mead, the ruddy wine,
Where now I drink whey-water; for company more fine
Than shrivelled hags, hag though I am, I pine.

The flood-tide thine!
Mine but the low down-curling ebbtide's flow,
My youth, my hope, are carried from my hand,
Thy flood-tide foams to land. . . .

I find them not
Those sunny sands I knew so well of yore;
Only the surf's sad roar sounds up to me,
My tide will turn no more.

Again I have used Miss Eleanor Hull's translation in place of the one Mrs. Hoagland has chosen.

There is the homesick song such as "Kincora" of MacLeag, and the juicy gourmandizing of MacConglinne's "A Vision that appeared to me," a forerunner of the 14th century "Land of Cockayne." Particularly charming and colorful are the numerous nature poems. The ancient Gaels' beloved Ireland was not merely a beautiful backdrop for the striding heroes of the Red Branch or Dinnshuchas; it was as full of intimate and delicate detail as a medieval tapestry; ousel, blackbird, lark, deer, hounds, trees and shrubs, the pounding sea, moon and stars are treated with affectionate understanding. Nature, in those rough, early days was so closely interwoven with the daily struggle for existence of every man, priest and peasant, battling hero and despairing lady.

Mrs. Hoagland has included some portions from the oldest Gaelic folk legends; the hero sagas of the 12th century Cuchulain or Red Branch cyle, and the Fenian or Ossianic cyle (9th-16th century). The reader will be impressed with their naturalness ("Sweeney the Mad") and a sprightliness typically Irish, combining as it does, the weaknesses and humor of the traditional supermen with their tremendous exploits, the lamentations of Deidre and Credhe, the lullaby of Diarmid and Grainne. It is this integrated jauntiness which is perhaps one of Ireland's greatest contributions to civilization.

It is important to note that in these ancient poems Mrs. Hoagland has so wisely chosen an unshakable foundation was laid for the future architecture of Irish poetry. Unrhymed as most of the translations are, nearly every poem seems set to music, natural music. The bite has certainly been put on the Anglo-Saxon literary purists; indeed, they will find in this selection of Irish verse an infectious lilt, crackling wit and natural humor about all things, heavenly or terrestrial; these early poems are rich with movement and life.

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Kathleen Hoagland has done a good service in bringing these early Gaelic poems to our attention. They point the way not only to an uncluttered faith in God, but in man and nature as well, and it is done without any haranguing. "Let there be a return to the medieval feeling for the universal character of truth." What other way out is there from our present muddy acre?

More Books of the Week

The Web of Government. R. M. MacIver. Macmillan. $4.50.

IT MAY BE too late to make a protest, but why social scientists insist upon the use of the term "myth" for idea or ideal escapes the ordinary reason. Philologically, they may be correct; but the term when used in our day has a definite connotation. A myth is simply a fantastic creation of the imagination to most people, so when social scientists write about the "Christian Myth," it shocks the Christian mind. A recent lecturer at a great university shocked a large part of his audience to the point of vigorous protest when he made a reference to "the Christ myth," although he meant no offense. When perfectly good words already exist to express what these people have in their minds—words which possess a genuine neutrality—it is difficult to understand why they must borrow from the mysterious language of the cult.

Despite his following the current rage in his use of the word "myth," Professor MacIver has written a readable analysis of political operations. It is not a description of governmental institutions and how they work. Nor does "web" as used in the title refer to the insidious workings of a mysterious plot to entangle the people hopelessly in government controls. In fact those who for some years past have feared "the encroachments of government" should take heed before rushing to the book for consolation. In speaking of the gradual extension of collectivist experiment in successful democracies such as Sweden and Denmark, he concludes: "The measures required to carry such a program into effect, though they would give government important new powers over private or corporate industry, need not be regarded, should they receive the approval of the majority, as a perilous advance on "the road to serfdom."

Professor MacIver covers the most important problems confronting the political order today in the domestic and international field with special emphasis on the social forces that produce change and status. The work provides that realistic approach to politics which makes for intelligent understanding of the political process.

JEROME G. KERWIN.

Curious Relations. William d'Arfey. Edited by William Plomer. Sloane. $3.00.

HERE is truncated evidence that the surface vein of family reminiscence tapped redoubtably by Clarence Day and more and more wildly by his imitators has perhaps run out. William d'Arfey is the pseudonym of a man who died before his book had advanced beyond a fragmentary rough draft; Mr. Plomer did some cutting and editing in pious memory of the late author's powers as a raconteur. One is asked to take the book "for what it is." Unfortunately, "Curious Relations" is nothing more than garrulity about what the author has the hardihood to call a sentimental journey into the late Victorian and Edwardian past, of not one but *two* families, the d'Arfeys and the Mountfaucons—of aristocrats run to eccentric seed. Much of the supposed oddity is of that type of naughtiness which has appeal for the conservative mind, so long as it merely extends but never breaks the pattern. The rest is cartoon stuff, such as the panel on Lady Honoria Filey, who wore brown-paper hats to church and attached a candle to her head to play Beethoven. In spite of a tardy epilogue of socially-conscious wonder about the spiritual decline of great families, "Curious Relations" is more of an effort to exploit than to understand.

RILEY HUGHES.

Soil and Steel. P. Alston Waring and Clinton S. Golden. Harper. $3.00.

FARMERS and industrial workers constitute 85 percent of the American population; they are 114 million strong. Yet farmers are often at the throats of workers and vice-versa. Businessmen generally have succeeded in bringing the farmers over to their side against the workers and the unions. The Farm Bureau and the National Grange are blood brothers of the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce.

Farmers, as a matter of fact, are closer to workers than they are to management. Both groups suffer the most from depressions. Injury to one necessarily inflicts hardship on the other. Yet the farmers must have adequate prices, the workers living wages. The authors show by what means both farmers and worker can prosper simultaneously.

Waring is a farmer, Golden a former officer of the United Steel Workers—C.I.O. Both are competent to speak for the groups they represent. Waring's contribution has greater significance because the book will probably reach more workers than farmers. But he could have contributed more in his section if he had tackled more boldly the obvious reason for the American farmer's plight.

Golden is weak in his treatment of the situation of Dock Street, Philadelphia, where farmers and trade unions come into close contact. He explains away most of the friction as lack of farmer understanding of industrial workers' problems. But he glosses over the fact that the Teamster local controlling the markets in this area has been responsible for much of the conflict.

GEORGE A. KELLY.

Life and the Dream. Mary Colum. Doubleday. $3.50.

MRS. COLUM has had an interesting life on two continents and has written an interesting book about it. With her husband she was a part of the literary and cultural movement that became a political movement and resulted in freedom of Southern Ireland. Since the beginning of World War I she has lived mostly in the United States, with extended visits to Hawaii, France, England and Ireland. She and her husband, writers themselves, have lived and associated mostly with writers and have known most of the authors and thinkers of our time—some of them intimately.

Naturally, Mrs. Colum is at her best in dealing with Ireland and its writers and leaders. She draws memorable pictures of William Butler Yeats, Lady Gregory, John M. Synge, Lord Dunsany and other bright lights that clustered about the Abbey Theatre. She knew or

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worked with George Russell, Padriac Pearce, Maud Gonne, Roger Casement, and Countess Markievicz, all of whom played such an important rôle in liberating their people, and she tells much about them that is new and much, also, that is stirring. When Mrs. Colum liked people she liked them without limit and her enthusiasm carries over into her book. Among those she liked thus were Elinor Wylie and James Joyce, and her accounts of them will present them in a new light to many of her readers. "Life and the Dream" abounds in interesting character portraits and penetrating criticism. For the most part it is sympathetic, for it is written mostly about her friends, but at times she can be sharp and rather bitter.

Although Mrs. Colum has lived a long time in the United States, she shows little understanding of American problems and not always of American aspirations. She is a bit scornful of young countries, forgetting that youth is the time of vigor and dreams. True, American vigor and dreams did not always go into poems and books, but that does not mean that the qualities are not there for those who can see them. Mrs. Colum herself says that she does not know much about politics, and this is evident in her book and will probably be the basis of some adverse criticism, especially from critics of the left. Her book is also perhaps too long, and would have been improved by more severe editing, for it contains duplications. On the whole, however, it is a good job, well done and well worth reading by anyone who is interested in an understanding of the literature of our day.

NEIL MACNEIL.

New Guinea Head Hunt. Caroline Mytinger. Macmillan. $4.00.

BEFORE the Japanese had pushed Guadalcanal into American history, Caroline Mytinger and Margaret Warner had gone "head-hunting" in the Solomons and, from Rabaul in New Britain, they set sail for Samarai to add some Papuan types to the Melanesian studies. The island of Samarai is a District Station in the Territory of Papua now controlled by Australia. It is a very small island with a hill in the center round which one can walk on a neat path in about twenty minutes. Instead of any native village, it has a power house, ice plant, movie theater, cricket field, tennis courts; it harbors a white population of about one hundred. The "head-hunters" hoped that the British on Samarai might provide enough commissions for portraits to finance an expedition to Yela Island where some pure bred Papuans were said to live in cannibalistic isolation. Commissions did indeed materialize together with an invitation to visit Yela on board an inter-island freighter. At first hand they learned why title to Yela had never been disputed. Dante might have dreamed of it for the "Inferno." Yela has neither beach nor lagoon; its outer periphery is composed of malodorous swamps whose decaying mangrove roots rise some six twisted feet above the sea, and the only approach to dry land is by winding sluggish creeks, crawling with twelve-foot crocodiles. Miss Mytinger hastily sketched a black hook-nosed Papuan who had paddled out to the ship and hastily left the island to its perpetual fog.

In Port Moresby on the mainland, more portrait commissions were forthcoming, together with the loan of the "Villa Viper" as a studio. The name was only too descriptive when they noticed a foot or so of snake swinging from the rafters: "O sinake," remarked the houseboy, "him fella name, Adolphine." It seems the serpent went with the house as a rat trap.

It was the continued search for pure Papuans which lured Miss Mytinger and her companion across the stormy Gulf of Papua to Daru Island at the mouth of the Fly. The Fly's estuary is 90 miles wide; the shores are low and mostly waterlogged. It was the rainy season and the plantation they visited up the river had its house raised on piles while the paths to it were also built up like dikes above the high water level. For a Christmas tree they turned the top of a palmetto upside down and lit it with glow worms.

Both "head-hunters" concur in the general opinion that legislation in the Territory of Papua is for the benefit of the natives thanks to the enlightened principles of the first Lt. Governor, Sir William McGregor, faithfully followed by Sir Hubert Murray. One of Miss Mytinger's prize models was a cannibal chief captured after a peculiarly horrible raid on the Upper Fly River but, since cannibalism was a traditional Papuan custom, the Government, instead of executing the offenders, considered their gaol sentence an educational period. The merits of this paternal attitude were demonstrated during the war by the wholehearted cooperation of the natives; while none were allowed to be conscripted, the native porters often at the sacrifice of their lives kept the supply line moving and carried out the wounded when the Japanese tried to cross the mountains to Moresby.

The author has gained greatly in maturity of attitude since her first book, except in her allergy for missionaries. Had she overcome her prejudice enough to visit Yule Island, she would have found some expert anthropologists among the Sacred Heart Fathers and might have been able to see the wonders of the great mountains and their isolated tribes. Sir Hubert Murray believes his Papuans are capable of education but leaves the proof to the Missions. Amateur anthropologists seem inclined to believe that native customs, however evil, should be preserved no matter at what cost to the natives.

Certainly the "head-hunters" are excellent sports; their courage matched by their sense of humor. Miss Mytinger paints and writes while Miss Warner is business manager who charms the natives with her music and the whites with her smile. It was she who took daily doses of quinine while the artist preferred a steadier hand and occasional bouts of fever. I really feel relieved that the book was written after they were safely home. E. V. R. WYATT.

Land of Plenty. Walter Dorwin Teague. Harcourt. $3.00.

"LAND OF PLENTY" is a strong flavored protest and an invitation by a capable and sharp-minded member of "the class of managers, engineers, technologists." Mr. Teague's invitation, a pressing and open one, is to a particular "way to felicity"; the protest is against miscellaneous and combined statism, unreality, demagogy, class war, sabotage and the general way we have been conducting ourselves since 1929—with the exception of how we make cars and war machines.

The protest is more persuasive than the author's picture of the happy life, his "summary of possibilities," to record the book's subtitle. He condemns first and capitally the conception of a "mature economy" with the political-

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economic thoughts, words and deeds which proceed from that demonstrated error. Mr. Teague's attractive dynamism comes from a close and professional and contagious appreciation of the astronomical production which American industry is capable of any time and has actually delivered for the special purpose of war. He is an "interior frontier" optimist as opposed to a "mature economy" pessimist. While expressing admiration for President Roosevelt in many ways, he comes down as hard as possible on the following quotation from what he considers the New Deal basic book, F. D. Roosevelt's "Looking Forward":

> "Our task now is not discovery of natural resources or necessarily of producing more goods. It is the soberer, less dramatic business of *administering resources and plants already in hand,* of seeking to establish foreign markets for our *surplus production,* of meeting the problem of *under-consumption,* or of *adjusting production to consumption,* of *distributing* wealth and products more equitably, of *adapting existing economic organization* to the service of the people."
>
> The italics are mine, and they reveal the complete orientation of the President's thought away from expansion and toward the distribution of existing or more limited production. Henceforth we are to live on our hump. . . . We are to pour no more sand on the conical pile: we are to flatten it out.

Mr. Teague disclaims *laissez faire,* but in the direction of a "New Freedom" and no "New Deal": private enterprise is to be the productive fountainhead, reasonably policed and supplemented by decent social services, but not crippled or superseded by the state, nor dissolved by class warfare. An especially eloquent part of the book urges social harmony, by "a true partnership in which risks, opportunities, and responsibilities are shared in just proportion by capital, management, and labor alike." He does not accept passively the class war psychology and practices which, when you stop to think, so amazingly have possessed the minds and hearts of present generations. His sense of urgency is disturbingly near original—"You might think that this problem of social union would be a topic of universal discussion consuming at least as many lines of print as the problems of international union with which it is so closely meshed, but this is not the case. . . ." Then his professional bias suggests a possibility whose prospect is not free of ambiguity: "The rallying point may well be the more thoughtful members of the management-specialist group, whose chief interest is in the improvement of the system as a whole and not in the preservation of any of its forms."

The most definite positive suggestion appears in an appendix outlining the ingenious "Keuls-Kenyon Plan to Stabilize Employment." It is a promising plan for the increase and stability of production and for the intelligent and equitable sharing of income and responsibility, but not this nor any of the other institutional amendments suggested in the book will grow to success by their logical merit. The heavier balance of industrial employees appears gradually to have become alienated from the private enterprise industrialism of recent decades. There is the problem of a unifying spirit and vision to bring society together so that we shall even try to solve our social and economic problems. The author realizes this and portrays the advanced engineer's "land of plenty" to fire our imagination. The great field of scientific-industrial potentiality is excitingly pictured: a sort of *Fortune* version of *Scientific American* practical dreams. Every man king of innumerable horsepower! Unhappily, it may seem to many of the alienated that every man would have to be a strange and scarey philosopher in the bargain.

Mr. Teague writes several disclaimers to reject the positions of rugged individualist, naïve materialist, starry optimist, and too functional and aseptic engineer. But the *Reader's Digest* carries an abridged version of "Land of Plenty" this month. The impact of the book as a whole is such that readers who feel disillusioned in such archaic and Philistine viewpoints require more assurances than the odd pages permit. "Felicity" requires a more extended "vision" than the authorities herein cited have so far provided. As prophets these people still fall short.

Endorsing the scientific-industrial achievement, Mr. Teague declares that ". . . ours is an artificial world built by us between ourselves and the world of nature." Nature in this sense can be conceived as only the hazards and limitations and burdens of the material environment, with which we can scientifically play and which we can synthetically circumvent. But over-concentration upon this material concept dims awareness of the more metaphysical natural law, and of nature as the way things are, from most elementary matter to the highest spirit. The production-distribution specialists take you only so far along this natural route, and it is apparently not they who can fit us harmoniously in our place where we can grasp satisfactorily the nature of the whole vision.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

The Wayward Bus. John Steinbeck. Viking. $2.75.

BY THIS TIME everybody knows about John Steinbeck. Some of the more forthright reviewers have dismissed the haplessness of "The Wayward Bus" without any words of assuagement. Other critics, although disturbed by the novel's astonishing weaknesses, have still tried to find in it the allegorical significance which Steinbeck's epigraph from "Everyman" would impose on the work. I think that this effort, stimulated perhaps by Steinbeck's reputation, by the remembrance of past glory, has been wasted. For Steinbeck's dreary, prurient pilgrimage has no real human or universal significance. It is nothing more than an unusually dismal bus ride—more dismal, depraved and meaningless than any man anywhere has ever taken.

Steinbeck appears to have been affected somewhat by the D. H. Lawrence idea of the Natural Man. At least I think that he attempts to realize it in the figure of Juan, the bus driver. But the wisdom, dignity and strength of the primitive of D. H. Lawrence are not in Steinbeck. Juan is just a satyr. And a good deal of Steinbeck's writing about him is ridiculous, stereotyped, hardly a cut above the sleazy sentimentalizing of the passion magazines.

There is also Pimples, a kind of lascivious idiot, conceivably patterned after some of the odd, unnerved inhabitants of William Faulkner's wonderful jungle. But the authentic symbolism, the insight of Faulkner as well as the greatness of his art are missing from Steinbeck's drawing. There is also Mr. Pritchard, a vapid, busy hypocrite. But Sinclair Lewis has given this sort of man-of-affairs his best, warmest and most thorough embodiment. And Steinbeck, in this characterization, does only a feeble imitation of the achievement of Lewis. A scrutiny of other characters: Juan's vulgar, distracted, alcoholic wife, the

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stupid waitress, both presented without a vestige of subtlety, the gadget salesman, very much like something out of the comic strips or possibly William Saroyan, and Camille, the decoy, whose mysterious attraction Steinbeck is unable to make very baleful—such a scrutiny would only repeat the judgments already passed and prolong the not especially pleasant task of assessing this book.

The publication of this latest work of Steinbeck does raise a very grave question: why do so many of our serious American writers deteriorate? Is it the lure of Hollywood or the submission to the point-of-view, the literary fascism of the New York dictators over literature that vulgarizes and enfeebles them? Certainly there is a depressing lack of distinction, a dead-leveling in current American fiction. And one cannot help wondering why our free citizens—the writers of talent and the literate reading public—do not resist the sinister attempt to exploit them. Banal and venal influences upon our culture and literature have, of course, entrenched themselves. Gorging themselves upon our souls, they have grown rich, fat, big and powerful. But it may not be too late for honest men to go to war against them.

FRANK O'MALLEY.

Three Came Home. Agnes Newton Keith. Little. $3.00.

THIS autobiographical tale of surviving the rigors of a Japanese prison camp follow the familiar pattern of lack of the ordinary facilities, starvation fare, brutality interwoven with occasional touches of kindness. It has, however, a number of distinguishing marks. It is effectively told in a straight, uncomplicated fashion. Mrs. Keith is a pacifist in that she holds that once war breaks out all cruelties are inevitable. She is also a Protestant of sorts who was much impressed with the nuns who suffered with her; she never reached the curiously conceived point at which she could "relax in belief in The Word." She carries a religious attitude throughout extreme suffering and sore anxieties for her baby son. Although there is no mistaking the ruthlessness which her account ascribes to her captors, she apparently harbors no rancor toward them. Even they were conscious of her lack of racial prejudice, and she was quick to mark the kindness which the Japanese soldiers manifested toward the captive children. It is difficult to say whether this account is more noteworthy for the author's attitude toward the Japanese or for the magnificent story it embodies of the struggle for survival of a mother with her infant son.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

Prepared for Rage. Mark Saxton. Sloane. $3.50.

MARK SAXTON in this novel has given us the soul searchings of Jerry Osgood throughout his childhood, adolescence, college, pre-war, and early war years, and, for all we know at the end, forever. The story that weaves through the book is prosaic enough, and, somewhat tiresomely, Saxton brings in enough detail of the social meanderings of undergraduate youth to suggest an attempt at frank realism that is only too obvious. Jerry thinks a great deal: at an early age, he is disappointed in faith; in adolescence, he ponders the action of his fellow men with mind-twistings that would worry any parent; and in his late Harvard years, he really wrestles. Along the latter way, he has a brief spell of entrancement with Sally, who was, all the time, secretly married to one of his friends; a drawn-out love affair with Denny, who can't give him a positive declaration of absolute devotion;

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and a courtship and marriage with Avian, who, even from childhood, had attracted him by her aloofness, her charm, and finally her mind. (Avian, logically, becomes a *Time* researcher, and Jerry ultimately becomes a writer for a liberal magazine.) Several inter-sections in the book give Jerry's adult ideas on the meaning of life in a wretched world, through the medium of a manuscript that he has sent Avian while he is serving in the Navy. And throughout the narrative, we are treated constantly to labored discussions by Jerry, his friends, his wife, his colleagues on the meaning of *things* in general.

The total effect of such lengthy probing is to destroy the great value of the book—its steady, often sharp sense of detail and some first-rate pictures of Harvard life and people, Jerry's wife and parents. When Jerry, after resolving all doubts, especially with an old on-and-off college conchie friend, finally goes into the Navy, he has settled in his mind the worth of fighting the war. He has straightened out in no uncertain terms the ideas of a man from AIA (American Industrial Association) who wanted an article written in Jerry's magazine glorifying the tyranny of business, etc.—Jerry *really* sets him right—and he leaves his wife and new baby with an inner conviction of duty that puts him on a level with millions who never had to experience the long search for values that he has gone through. In spite of tediousness in the theme, and a repetitious dredging of the liberal sands, there is care in Saxton's work. There is sincerity of tone and manner, and there is clarity of expression. Too bad that his characters are typed almost to the point of exhaustion, that his realistic scenes are slightly comic, and that Jerry's bedlam becomes, finally, little more than confusion.

T. E. CASSIDY.

Saudi Arabia. K. S. Twitchell. Princeton. $2.50.

TWO YEARS AGO when President Franklin D. Roosevelt and King Abdul Aziz ibn-Sa'ud met each other in the waters of Egypt's Great Bitter Lake and talked over US military and commercial missions to Sa'udi Arabia, a new period began in the relations between the Arabian peninsula and the Western World. The future of the large Arabian country is determined by the fact that four American oil companies (Standard Oil of California, Texas Co., Standard Oil of New Jersey and the Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.) have monopolized the rights to exploit the biggest potential oil basin in the world, hidden under the desert sands. The mine resources are also exploited by an American company. King Abdul Aziz's heir to the throne, Crown Prince Sa'ud, has recently been in this country inspecting irrigation and manufacturing projects that might be adapted in Sa'udi Arabia.

In view of this cooperation between two countries of a very antagonistic civilization and separated by half the globe, some first hand information about little-known Sa'udi Arabia seems very desirable indeed. K. S. Twitchell, an American mining engineer, has perhaps been more closely associated with the present problems of Sa'udi Arabia than any other American. There is much of Sa'udi Arabia which has not previously been visited by non-Moslems, through which the author was able to travel in connection with the reports on mining possibilities and irrigation problems he made for King Abdul Aziz's administration.

Twitchell may be a grand engineer, but he is not a great writer. He gives many interesting details, but not

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THE STRUGGLE Mr. Peattie has in mind is the general state of cultural-economic-racial contention that he found, during his recent visit down there, to be the prevailing life-temperature in the Union of South Africa, and the veld he is thinking of is the high, broad plateau that runs up the east side of the Union from the Orange Free State to Southern Rhodesia. Mr. Peattie hit on this way of summing up his impressions while he was stationed in South Africa during the war, as chief of the Union office of the Washington OWI. He was in South Africa, he says, for less than a year. In general, he manages to sound like a man who was there a good deal longer than that; hardly anybody, though, will conclude that it took him more than a year to write this book about it.

As he shuttled energetically from Durban to Johannesburg to Port Elizabeth, and to the mines and farms in between, Mr. Peattie was shaken by spectacles of horror and delight on all sides. He was tremendously taken with the special beauty of the countryside and declares himself to be, even now, suffering from veld fever. On the other hand, as the holder of a full set of uncompromising American liberal social beliefs, he was frequently undone, emotionally, by instances of Bantu and Asiatic earthly misery. Among the economically élite he preferred the descendants of the Boers, a leaning he attempts to make engaging, on one occasion, by means of a brilliantly inept parody of English colonial conversation between four o'clock and five-thirty in the afternoon. Like most places in the world, Mr. Peattie thinks the Union of South Africa would be improved by a little more food and education for everybody.

JOHN BRODERICK.

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THE ANSWER

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